THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Representations have been received from the tobacco growers and beedi workers opposing the proposed anti-tobacco legislation which they apprehend may adversely affect their employment. The Tobacco Board had discussed this matter with representatives of tobacco exporters, cigarette industry Tobacco Institute of India, and some members of Parliament and recommended that an Expert Committee be constituted by the Government to examine its implications and the legislation be kept in abeyance till the Committee gives its findings. These recommendations have been passed on to the Ministry of Health for their consideration.

Countries having favourable balance of trade with India

3151. SHRI K. M. KHAN:

MAULANA OBAIDULLAH KHAN AZMI:

SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the countries with which balance of payment/trade balance has been in favour of India during 1993--94;

(b) the countries having surplus and deficit trade balance with India during the above period; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government to bring favourable balance of trade for India with countries with whom the trade balances are in deficit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) The major countries with which India had surplus trae baldance during 1993-94 are Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Russia; Spain; Singapore; Thailand and USA. The major countries with which India had deficit trade balance during the same year are France; Nigeria; Republic of Korea; Sweden; Switzerland and U.K.

(c) Export promotion is a continuous process and steps are taken to boost exports in consultation with trade, industry and other relevant interests. The Government is striving to make the environment of policies and procedures more export friendly. The measures include grant of income tax exemption on export profits, access to cheaper export credit designated in convertible currency, and assistance to Export Promotion Councils for export market development.

Guidelines to States for incentives to exporters

3152. MAULANA OBAIDULLAH KHAN AZMI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued any guidelines or offered a package of incentives to the State Governments for providing infrastructural facilities and special incentives to the exporters of their respective States;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have received any suggestions from the State Governments to modify the guidelines;

(d) if so, the details thereof; Statewise; and

(e) the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir

(b) to (e) Export Promotion Industrial Parks (EPIP) Scheme has been formulated in consultation with State Governments and the Planning Commission. The Scheme envisages that 75 percent of the capital expenditure incurred towards creation of infrastructure facilities for export oriented production, which will ordinarily be limited to rupees ten Crores in each case, will be met from Central Government grant to the State Governments. In addition, a maintainence grant equivalent to 2 percent of export turnover of each unit established therein is also proposed to be made available to the State Government for a period of five years from the date of commercial production of that unit. As on date the Government of India have approved proposals from seven State Governments namely Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Kerala to set-up EPIPs.

(ii) There is a proposl to develop Export Intensive Areas Sub-Plan Scheme for drawing-up short-term plans of assistance to up-grade infrastructural facilities. This Scheme envisages measures to remove infrastructure bottlenecks at important export production centres in coordination with State Governments. Presently, proposals for Tirupur and Moradabad are under consideration.

(iii) The Centre has recognised atleast one Corporation in each State as an Export House irrespective of its current level of export performance.

(iv) A States Cell is functioning in the Ministry of Commerce for maintaining an active Centre-State Interface of export promotion.

(v) Focal Point Officers with specific territorial responsibilities have been appointed in the Ministry of Commerce to deal wth problems of States with respect to exports

(vi) Nodal Officers for attending to the problems pertaining to exports have been appointed in the Central Ministries.

Suggestions have been received from State Governments in the matter of improving facilities for exports. These inter-alia are:—

(i) A fixed percentage of the export earning from the States should be maked available to the State Governments as special assistance for creation/strengthening of infrastructural facilities for exports.

(ii) Central assistance should be provided for participation in International Trade Fairs|Exhibition and for undertaking export promotion visits abroad.

(iii) Central assistance should be provide for identification of markets for specific products of small scale units.

Based on these suggestions and interaction with the State the following steps have been proposed:—

I. Giving of some weightage under "Special Problems" for export promotion activities undertaken by States as per Mukherjee Formula for devolution of Central Funds to States is being considered in consultation with Planning commission.

II An Export Intensive Areas Sub-Plan Scheme for drawing-up short terms plans of assistance to ungrade infrastructural facilities in these areas is being considered in this Ministry.

III A Scheme for National Export Awards for rewarding outstanding performance of State Governments in their export promotion efforts is also proposed